

AN HOUR IN CASTLE GARDEN.

The Landing of Emigrants—Where They Are Put—What They Look Like and What They Do—What They Eat and Where They Sleep—Servant Girl Experiences.

Did any of our readers ever pay a visit to Castle Garden? Perhaps some of them may have done so from motives of curiosity to view a crumbling relic of old New York, while those more practical may have passed an hour there vainly endeavoring to select from the reeking horde of emigrants a cook or chambermaid. Castle Garden proper is situated on the northwestern extremity of the piece of ground known as the Battery. A large circular building, covering half an acre in extent, with a flat dome of whitewashed wood-work, perforated with glass windows, whether to let the numerous stench made escape, or to permit the air from the outside—rather foul at the best to pass in, is a novel edifice to be solved by the Commissioners of Emigration.

The building itself is of brown, unwhitened stone, with the old embrasures for guns still remaining, as they appeared when the first Bonaparte issued his famous Berlin decree to crush English commerce. The parapet gateway, or entrance to the Battery, as it was called, still exists in all its huge proportions, with its square cut blocks of stone, and through its portals have passed in ten years 2,500,000 emigrants from every nation on the face of the globe as contributions to the future voting population of the States. A level, arid, sandy plain, denominated the Battery, for the reason that no guns are visible, fronts the Castle Garden, and is encumbered with peanut stands, apple stands, lemonade stands, stands where Bologna sausages and large loaves of Dutch bread are exposed for sale, and where gingerbread cakes as large as pie-plates can be obtained for the moderate sum of two cents. Aged but vituperative Irish women of masculine frame, with bleary eyes, tawdry garments, and faces lined with the wrinkles of hardship, dispense the delicacies of the season to the emigrants. The peanuts are not equal to pites or foie gras as a relish, the apples rot in the sun for want of purchasers, the sausages are mouldy and not fit for sinner's consumption; but the crowning glory of these retail hawkster-stands is the lemonade kept by them in dirty wooden or tin pails. This delicious beverage has three ingredients or component parts, namely, molasses, vinegar, and water. A few decayed and repeatedly squeezed lemon rinds, intended to deceive the keen eye of the observer, float on top of the dirty-looking fluid. The tongues of the Dames de la Halle at Paris, or the notorious fish-women of London, cannot outrival in acerbity and virulence these women when once let loose upon any offending party. We witnessed an instance of their agreeable proficiency in the art of abuse. A half-grown boy of the street had, it seems, purchased a glass of lemonade from an aged Celtic priestess, and after putting it to his lips, such was the horror and sensation of disgust experienced, that the glass involuntarily dropped from his grasp and fell to the ground, where it lay for a moment broken into small fragments. With a howling rage the savage sprang at the boy, crying—

"What did 'oo brake my glass for, 'oo scamp; ayeh!"

"I did't mean to," whispered the gamin, in a whining tone.

"I'll tache you to brake my glass, which cost me twenty cents, you young vagabond," and so saying, she fell upon the lad in a great rage, and beat him in the face with her clenched fists, for a minute or two, to the great delight of the spectators. The boy would have been half murdered but for the intervention of a burly policeman, who stood at the gate of the Castle Garden, curling his beautiful moustache, and admiring the graceful curve of his shapely leg. This majestic being advanced with a commanding step; instantly the crowd fell back in reverential awe at his portly presence.

"'Wot's all this?" said he, in a voice like thunder. "'Wot's all this about, I should like ter know? Can nobody speak?" and the majestic being glared in inquiry upon the terror-stricken crowd.

"I only w-a-r-rum'd that spalpeen's ears for breaking my glass," whined the virago, and with proverbial gallantry the noble policeman, finding that the sympathies of the crowd were with the woman and the broken vessel, turned to the reckless boy and threatened to warm him soundly for his brutality. The boy shrank off in a meek manner, and Castle Garden saw him no more.

Feeling considerable premonitory dread as to our reception by this formidable being in blue cloth, we asked in an humble manner—

"Sir, can you tell me if strangers are permitted to enter the Garden?"

"The 'sir' mollified this gentleman to a great extent, and in a gracious, patronizing tone, he signified his permission. Entering a long, narrow passage, with a flight of stairs at the end, we ascended and found ourselves in a large room dedicated to the clerical staff employed by the Commissioners of Emigration to transact the business of registering the emigrants. A number of frowny-looking and gawky emigrants sat outside of an enclosure, waiting for an opportunity to procure information. Whether their universal contact with emigrants, who are looked upon as so many cattle by these fellows, has rendered them gruff and unresponsive for information promptly, and rigidly impassive or deaf when questioned, mildly, we do not know; but it is certain that for stolid indifference a Castle Garden clerk would compare favorably with Zeno himself. While waiting in the office a scene occurred worthy of mention. A huge Irishwoman, with red hair and freckled face, evidently not an emigrant, but rather a drunken, besotted specimen of the race, advanced towards the desk, carrying a red-headed baby, with a sorrowful affliction in his face and head. A very impassive young gentleman, with black side-whiskers, who sat at a desk, cried out in a stentorian voice to the woman, who had no stockings or shoes—

"What do you want?"

"I want to see Mistress Casherly, beka?"

"What do you want?" again cried the young gentleman, in a manner not quite so impassive as before.

"I want to see Mistress Casherly, ye know, beka?"

"Go down stairs," said the young gentleman of impassive temper.

"I want to see Mistress Casherly, beka?"

"Go down stairs," cried the young gentleman, with a great glitter in his eyes.

"I tell ye I want to see Mistress Casherly, beka ye see?"

"Will you go down stairs?" yelled the impassive young gentleman, in a now thoroughly roused state. The woman obeyed this time, and the impassive young gentleman, feeling that he had done his duty, sat down in a state of exhaustion. Leaving him in this state of mind, we left the office, went down a flight of stairs, and entered through a high and wide gateway a huge circular hall, used for the reception of emigrants during their stay in Castle Garden. The hall is about three hundred feet in circumference, with galleries run-

ning all round, and resembles a circus more than anything else. Lightly admitted through glass side-windows fifty feet from the floor, but no air. A deadening, stifling smell greets the nostrils as you enter the hall, almost overpowering. It is said that a keen-nosed traveller may discover forty different stenches in the streets and parlors of Cologne, each stench and odor differing from the other thirty-nine. But the stench which strikes you as you enter Castle Garden is a combination of forty different odors, not one of which resembles the Balm of a Thousand Flowers or Jockey Club. You can faintly recognize sauerkraut, decayed bologna, boiled butter, peanuts, unwashed women, the odor of venerable hams, boiled corned beef and cabbage, onions, rancid cheese, herrings, and many other kindred stenches. A motley crowd of rather swart emigrants are herded together on the bare floor of the Garden, like so many sheep or pigs. From every nation in the world, from far-off Sweden and Norway, from the homes of Dalecarlia, from Sudermania, charcoal burners from the Black Forest, in their cafts, with light hair, red stockings reaching to their knees, and heavy wooden sabots. Peasants with ruddy faces from Cork and Kerry, from Dublin and Galway, fair, fresh young girls with trustful look and laughing, wondering faces from the Danube, Rhine, and Shannon, all mingled promiscuously, chatting, talking, eating, crying, or sleeping quietly. A cargo of Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes have just been landed, and herd together to the number of 250 on the floor, gazing and wondering at everything they see and hear. They left Gotteburg 40 days since en route for the prairies of Illinois, via Hamburg, Liverpool, and New York. They look travel-stained, dirty, and weary, but as yet have not begun to understand the toil, trouble, and difficulties of their new life. Their pastor, a venerable, starchy-looking son of Dalecarlia, with white hair and deep blue eyes, sits among them on an old trunk. He has accompanied them all the way, and will see them safe to the settlement of which he is pastor in far-off Illinois. One of his flock, a middle-aged woman with deep blue Scandinavian eyes, and tawny hair hanging down her flushed cheeks, is engaged in cutting up a huge sausage for the delectation of the "Pastor." The men are all stout-bodied, hearty-looking fellows, muffled up in warm homespun, as if they were among the frosty flocks of Norway, and carry at their belts short dirk knives in leather sheaths. They have all blue eyes and light hair, such as is never seen among Latins or Celts, and is only to be found among Scandinavians or Saxons. To look upon these fair faces and deep, earnest blue eyes, almost burning in their intensity, one is prone to think of the ancestors of the people before him—of Gustavus Vasa, of Margaret of Denmark, the Semiramis of the North, of Harold Harfager, of Odin, the Father of the Gods, of Freya and Lok, the Spirits of Evil, of Sagas and Sealds, of warriors and priests, and heroes who went forth yearly to burn, destroy, and capture, who drank wine from the skulls of their enemies, and sought vainly during a thousand years for Valhalla, the home of the gods. Ains for romance! These poor, impenitent peasants never heard of Odin, being strict Lutherans, and their only trouble is to know if Chicago is as far from New York as New York is from Stockholm. The emigrants who speak the English language are kept in separate compartments of this large circular hall, or bull-pen, as it might be more properly termed. The floor is swept once a day, but even that does not suffice, for the place is in itself a sink of filth, and unfit for human beings as a place of occupation. The galleries are sometimes filled as well as the lower floor, when there is a number of passengers, and a strange sight is presented from the various costumes worn by the peasant emigrants. Now, for instance, let us go among the Swedes. Here are children, men, and women huddled together upon the floor promiscuously, and without any proper sanitary precaution, in the hottest weather. One half of the emigrants are sleeping, and the other half are close together as to like spouses, some with a dirty rag covering them, while not a few of the women's body clothes are tossed about in a manner which ought to call a blush to the cheek of any adult. Here is a very pretty little girl of twelve years or thereabouts, her lower limbs exposed as she sleeps, and it is evident that a plentiful application of soap and water would do her no harm. One single case of contagious disease among those 250 Swedes, and ere nightfall every one of them would be stricken by the destroying hand.

To prevent imposition upon the emigrants a semblance of keeping out the emigrant boarding-house keepers is maintained by the Commissioners; but, notwithstanding, they may be found inside of the Garden every day, the only precaution that is taken to protect the interests of the emigrant being that the boarding-house shark of until all the routine business of the place is transacted with them, and then these scoundrels are free to do their worst. Boarding-house keepers are allowed to advertise their dens of infamy inside of the walls of the Garden in every known language—English, French, Italian, Spanish, German, Swedish, Danish, Welsh, Russian, and Swiss. The rates charged by these fellows range generally as follows:—Board per week for adults, \$8 in currency; per day, \$1-50 in currency; single meals, 50 cents; single lodgings, 50 cents. The fare is just what might be expected from these blood-suckers and human vampires. There are three lunch counters or restaurants within the walls, and there can be no possible competition, as no person is allowed to enter the Garden or leave it without a reason. Printed bills of fare line the counters, in the different languages, with the tariff as follows:—

Sausages, per pound.....\$0 25
Cheese, per pound.....\$0 25
Milk, per quart.....\$0 10
Loaf of bread.....\$0 10
Loaf of home-made bread.....\$0 10
1 cigar.....\$0 25
1 package smoking tobacco.....\$0 10

Behind the counters the emigrants may feast their eyes upon huge loaves of bread, huge bulks of cheese, raw hams, and now and then comes the odor of coffee, of what quality we cannot undertake to say, as we did not taste it. Passing through the rear gate of the Castle you will find yourself at the river's bank, where several barges used for transporting emigrants from the shipping to the Castle, are lying. There is a kind of terra-platin of stone, and beneath this the emigrants sit day after day, listening to the constant splash of the waves, and looking with wistful eyes out towards the Narrows and the sea, thinking vaguely and confusedly of the Vaterland whence they came. Here they sit, staring vacantly, without purpose as yet, not yet prepared for the stern realities of the New World, sun-browned and tanned by exposure on the crowded decks of the emigrant ship.

"They are rough with the salt of the sea, they are brown with the brand of the sun; they are weary of the sea; they are weary of the sun; they are weary of the sea; they are weary of the sun."

"Tug at the heavy oar; Heave at the stubborn oar; Tossed in the mid-sea gale, Swept on the fatal shore."

Sweet is rest, oh! sweet is rest, 'Tis to lie down and waste the breast,— Naught beyond but the unknown West, Naught but the way unknown."

The emigrant, on leaving the side of the emigrant ship lying in the stream, after she has passed the perils of quarantine, is taken on board of a barge or tug, with his trunks, bedding, clothing, bottles, parcels, and old rubbish of all kinds, and from thence transported to the water-gate of Castle Garden. On arriving there he is relieved of his trunks and baggage, which is stowed away carefully in racks and numbered in a corresponding fashion, with the number placed opposite the emigrant's name in the register, where his baptismal appellation, surname, birthplace, age, occupation, and future destination are registered for future reference. The boxes and trunks are kept in a long covered way which makes half the circuit of the garden, and affords ample food for reflection. Here there are boxes of all shapes and sizes—tin boxes, wooden boxes, metal boxes, boxes of oak and pine, of cedar, rosewood, and mahogany, oblong and round, some large as the trunk of a tree, and some as small as a shoe. The boxes of McClellan, of the Peninsula, others fit to hold the title-deeds or regalia of an empire. The eastern side of the Castle is devoted to the baggage of emigrants going out of the city, and when they arrive at Buffalo, Chicago, St. Louis, Boston, or Cincinnati, they find their baggage ready for them as soon as they have satisfied the charges upon the freight. The English-speaking emigrants are registered first, and then the Germans. After being registered, which takes a long time, the emigrants are driven into the bull-pen to await a further disposition. Lavatories, or places for washing, are located around the Castle—large, gloomy-looking places, calculated to keep before the eyes of the emigrant the holes or stowage of the ship from which he has just departed. Washing or cleanliness is not enforced upon the emigrants, and the huge blocks of soap and the damp, wet floor of the washing-rooms present a very black and disconsolate aspect. Around the walls of the bull-pen are scattered huge maps of the States and Territories, admirably calculated to impress upon the minds of foreigners the great size and extent of Uncle Sam's dominions. The walls of this filthy house resounded with the clash of muskets, drums, and swords of the old regular army, and afterwards to the glorious warblings of the peerless Jenny Lind, to the delicious strains of Catharine Hayes, and to the crash of Jullien's horns and instruments; for here were given the monster concerts of this great artist when in his prime. Well, to-day it would make Jenny Lind sick to look down from one of the galleries where thousands used to sit entranced listening to her "Norma," and behold her own countrymen and women, from far-off Upsala and Stockholm, herded together like sheep in a July sun. The ghost of the great Jullien would not allow its white-gloved fingers to rest upon polluted lute or door-jamb for fear of contamination. Large blue-bottle flies haunt the seams of the large blue-bottle flies in the floor of the bull-pen, sucking and feasting upon the corruption. A thousand persons have often been confined in this worse than Black Hole of Calcutta, while at other times not a score of emigrants are present. It is an erroneous impression that the emigrants from northern countries surpass in cleanliness those from the more southern climes. The Swedes, Germans, and Russians are, very contrary to general expectation, the Irish and French compare favorably with other races in cleanliness, and surpass them in light-heartedness and a disposition to bear up under hardships. The Welsh emigrants are, nearly all, consigned to the embraces of the Mormon chiefs of Utah. The specimens of Welsh emigrants who were here, bound for Salt Lake, and the miners and mill-spinners from some of the rural districts of England, are terribly dirty and ignorant. Great numbers of the English emigrants have little or no knowledge of the Creator, or of any revealed form of religion. The ignorance and brutality of the lower classes of English emigrants are astounding, and would be deemed incredible by him who knows nothing of the facts presented. Here is a group of Irish emigrants sitting upon their household Lanes and Penates. There are three little girls, ranging from three to ten years of age, a motherly-looking woman of fifty, and a boy of fifteen. The family are dressed comfortably, and rather cleanly. The mother is crying quietly; the smallest girl has caught the infection from the old woman, and is burying her tiny knuckles in her eyes with great determination, while the boy stares steadfastly at the ceiling, and keeps his mouth wide open as a common thoroughfare for the nasty flies which infest the bull-pen. An acclimatized friend, with a rowdy look, is talking to the old lady, and endeavoring to make her feel comfortable, but she will not be comforted. She left the hills of far-off Tipperary at the bidding of a faithful son, who resides "some place" in "Missus Sully," as the old lady expresses it, but she has lost the address, and forgets the name of the precise locality.

"Can't ye remember the name of the place at all, at all, Biddy?" says her comforter.

"The devil a bit me know, Jamesy told me in the letter that there was a great deal of water near his place. Is there much water in Missus Sully? Will ye stop yer believing there, Molly?"

"Is it in Necessary ye mane? Sure, its full of water and snakes."

"Cross of Christ! are the snakes alive, Tim?"

"'Yis, Biddy, and kicking, too."

"Well, I wish I never had left Nenagh, in ould Tipperary," said the old lady, "for when I'm out here, shure, Andy, that I thought 'd be some use to me, is no more than an oad-han," pointing to her son, who still kept his mouth open for the admission of flies.

There is an hospital attached to the Castle Garden Depot, situated on Ward's Island. Ward's Island is 108 acres in extent, and about \$12,000 worth of produce is raised annually on the island by patients. There is an attendant physician at the Castle, and an apothecary's shop. Cases of fever and cholera are instantly carried without to the hospital for treatment. Two millions and a half of emigrants have passed through Castle Garden during the last ten years, bringing with them an average of \$50 per head. This amounts in the gross aggregate to one hundred and twenty-five millions of dollars. During the year 1866, 233,418 persons arrived at Castle Garden, bringing with them 203,236 pieces of baggage. Of this number 106,716 were from Germany, 68,074 from Ireland, 36,186 from England, 4979 from Sweden, 3907 from France, 3685 from Switzerland, 3246 from Denmark, 1626, and Holland, 1506; the remainder were from seventeen different countries. The States most favored by the emigrants on leaving Castle Garden are New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Massachusetts. The Germans go to Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Wisconsin; the Irish to New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Jersey; the Swedes to Delaware; the English to New York and Pennsylvania; the Scotch to New York, and Illinois; and the French to New York, Louisiana, and Canada. The greatest number of vessels call at the ports of Europe in the following order:—Liverpool, Bremen, London, Hamburg, Glasgow, Hesse, Antwerp, and

Londonderry. Formerly the Irish preponderated, now the Germans have the ascendancy in the proportion of one hundred to sixty. The Commissioners of Emigration have officers in every city in the State of New York for the aid and protection of emigrants. There is attached to the Castle Garden depot an office for the employment of emigrant girls who desire to procure situations as help in families. The room devoted to this purpose is located on the northeast corner of the Castle Garden. The room is oblong, about 50 feet in length and 25 feet in width, with seats arranged with an aisle in the middle like a church, and a desk railed in where a pupil would be in a church, behind which sits a gentleman of the Teutonic persuasion, in a mixed pepper-and-salt suit, to answer questions. Here it is the custom for persons who desire to get a great deal of work for very little money to apply for servant "gals," as the policemen call them, before being detailed to help. Any girl who has just landed at this place and submitting her person to inspection to those who may desire female help. Having procured a place and entered the service of her employer, she may, if she dislikes the remuneration or her wish to leave her situation, and the privilege is accorded to her of returning to the Employment Agency at the Garden, as often as she changes her mind during the space of twelve calendar months from the time she has landed on the shores of the New World. The large majority of these girls who seek employment are industrious, clean, and honest before being detailed by the ill and contumacious of the great city. Some of these are, however, very giddy, thoughtless, fond of dress, gaudy colors, and easily led away by soft and honeyed words. They may have to encounter two great dangers, which shall be specified: Cut off from home and parental teaching, set adrift in a strange land, it is a common occurrence with them to obtain employment in families, when designing scoundrels employ every art and influence of money and circumstances to seduce and destroy them. The other danger is from the emigrant boarding-house keepers, who haunt the Castle Garden depot like evil spirits to entice any fish that may be entangled in their nets. Nominally these birds of prey are supposed to be deprived of any power to further their ends; but this is altogether a mistake as the calendar of crime in our courts, and the catalogue of wretched women in these dens of infamy infesting the city, will show; but a majority of the girls are poor emigrants, driven to desperate courses by the circumstances they are placed in after they leave Castle Garden. Very few German girls ever seek employment in the office at the depot, as they are picked up in the bull-pen by these scoundrels, speaking their own language, who make magnificent promises to them, and wheedle them, in order to have them accompany them to their dens. Very few single girls, without friends, arrive in New York city with more than fifty dollars in money. These boarding-house sharks charge eight dollars a week for lodgings and food. Having got the girl into the boarding-house, the next thing is to buoy her up with delusive hopes of a comfortable situation, which they are certain never to procure for her, and having done this, it is then necessary to encourage her to procure cheap finery, and end by keeping her at the boarding-house for a month to get her in debt. Then, should she desire to leave, the next move is to hold her clothing and trunk for a bogus board bill. The society of abandoned women, who are employed to sap the poor girl's virtue, and the troubles of prosecution for debt, make the girl a pliant instrument in the hands of the boarding-house shark. She then becomes an easy victim to the lust of the highest bidder, and her ruin is consummated. Many of these girls, after undergoing a course of prostitution and shame for two or three months in the larger beer dens of Greenwich street, the dance houses of Water street, or the perillous of Greene and Moore, which they are certain never to procure for her, and having done this, it is then necessary to encourage her to procure cheap finery, and end by keeping her at the boarding-house for a month to get her in debt. Then, should she desire to leave, the next move is to hold her clothing and trunk for a bogus board bill. 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